2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

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Implementation of article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and paragraphs 3 and 4 (c) of the 1995 Decision on "Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament"

Report submitted by Ireland

1. States parties agreed in the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons that there should be regular reports, within the framework of the NPT strengthened review process, by all States parties on the implementation of Article VI and paragraph 4 (c) of the 1995 Decision on "Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament".

2. Ireland hereby submits its report to the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

3. Ireland participated actively in the third session of the Preparatory Committee, as Presidency of the European Union and as a member of the New Agenda Coalition.

4. In 2004, Ireland, together with NAC partners, co-sponsored General Assembly resolution 59/75 (Accelerating the implementation of nuclear disarmament commitments).

Implementation of the 13 practical steps for the systematic and progressive efforts to implement article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and paragraphs 3 and 4 (c) of the 1995 Decision on "Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament" included in the Final Document adopted by consensus at the 2000 Review Conference:

Step 1

The importance and urgency of signatures and ratifications, without delay and without conditions and in accordance with constitutional processes, to achieve the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

5. Ireland ratified the CTBT in July 1999 and has advocated the urgent need for its entry into force without delay and without conditions. Ireland has worked in support of this within the European Union

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and the New Agenda Coalition. Ireland continues to see the CTBT as one of the fundamental building steps on the road to nuclear disarmament.

6. Ireland was a co-signatory of the Joint Ministerial Statement of Support for the CTBT, at the United Nations General Assembly in September 2004, in which, the co-signatories, inter alia, called upon all States to continue a moratorium on nuclear weapon test explosions or any other nuclear explosions and that voluntary adherence to such a moratorium is of the highest importance, but does not have the same permanent and legally binding effect as the entry Into force of the Treaty. We also reaffirmed our commitment to the Treaty's basic obligations and call on all States to refrain from acts which would defeat the object and purpose of the Treaty pending its entry into force.

Step 2

A moratorium on nuclear weapon test explosions or any other nuclear explosion pending entry into force of that Treaty.

7. Ireland, along with our EU partners, has urged all States to abide by a moratorium and to refrain from any actions that are contrary to the obligations and provisions of the CTBT. The New Agenda Coalition resolution 59/75 called for the early entry into force of the CTBT.

Step 3

The necessity of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices in accordance with the statement of the Special Coordinator in 1995 and the mandate contained therein, taking into consideration both nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation objectives. The Conference on Disarmament is urged to agree on a programme of work, which includes the immediate commencement of negotiations on such a treaty with a view to their conclusion within five years.

8. Ireland has been a member of the Conference of Disarmament since 1999 and has actively supported efforts to break the deadlock on the work programme. Ireland supports the efforts of the Five Ambassadors to build upon the initial Amorim proposal and the most recent efforts to resolve the deadlock. We maintain the view that the Conference should begin negotiations on a Treaty dealing with fissile material.

9. In his address to the NPT Review Conference on 2 May 2005, Ireland's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Dermot Ahern, expressed his disappointment that the Conference on Disarmament has not been able to fulfil the mandate given at the last Review Conference to agree on a programme of work, which would include negotiation on such a treaty.

Step 4

The necessity of establishing in the Conference on Disarmament an appropriate subsidiary body with a mandate to deal with nuclear disarmament. The Conference on Disarmament is urged to agree on a programme of work which includes the immediate establishment of such a body.

10. Ireland continues to favour the early establishment of a subsidiary body to deal specifically with the issue of nuclear disarmament. We also see merit in embarking on a process, which will eventually lead to an agreement on the non-weaponisation of outer space.

Step 5

The principle of irreversibility to apply to nuclear disarmament, nuclear and other related arms control and reduction measures.

11. The principle of irreversibility is a fundamental one that must be applied to all disarmament and arms control measures (regardless of whether they are unilateral, bilateral or multilateral). Ireland considers the application of this principle is the only guarantee against the possibility of redeployment.

Step 6

An unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon states to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament to which all States parties are committed under article VI.

12. Ireland as a member of the New Agenda Coalition continues to press for verifiable progress under this step. The fulfillment, by the nuclear weapon states, of this unequivocal undertaking is a basic necessity for the achievement of a nuclear weapon-free world.

13. As Ireland's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Dermot Ahern, noted in his statement to the NPT Review Conference on 2 May, the legally binding obligations to refrain from the development of nuclear weapons, which the vast majority of States Parties to this Treaty have honoured, were undertaken in the context of equally legally binding obligations by the Nuclear Weapons States to eliminate their nuclear weapons. He added that that is the underlying bargain in the Treaty and that it is doubtful whether the NPT could ever have been achieved without such agreement.

Step 7

The early entry into force and full implementation of START II and the conclusion of START III as soon as possible while preserving and strengthening the ABM Treaty as a cornerstone of strategic stability and as a basis for further reductions of strategic offensive weapons, in accordance with its provisions.

14. Developments since 2000 (the United States abrogation of the ABM and the demise of START III) have not removed the need for a basis for further reductions of strategic offensive weapons. Ireland welcomes the conclusion of the Moscow Treaty between the United States and the Russian Federation in 2002 as an important step in the right direction. We would, however, emphasise the importance of the principles of irreversibility and transparency to all arms control measures.

Step 8

The completion and implementation of the Trilateral Initiative between the United States of America, the Russian Federation and the International Atomic Energy Agency.

15. Ireland continues to support this initiative and would welcome regular updates on progress from the parties involved.

Step 9

Steps by all the nuclear-weapon states leading to nuclear disarmament in a way that promotes international stability, and based on the principle of undiminished security for all:

- ***Further efforts by the nuclear-weapon states to reduce their nuclear arsenals unilaterally.***
- ***Increased transparency by the nuclear-weapon states with regard to their nuclear weapons capabilities and the implementation of agreements pursuant to article VI and as a voluntary confidence-building measure to support further progress on nuclear disarmament.***
- ***The further reduction of non-strategic nuclear weapons, based on unilateral initiatives and as an integral part of the nuclear arms reduction and disarmament process.***
- ***Concrete agreed measures to further reduce the operational status of nuclear weapons systems.***
- ***A diminishing role for nuclear weapons in security policies to minimise the risk that these weapons ever be used and to facilitate the process of their total elimination.***
- ***The engagement as soon as appropriate of all the nuclear-weapon states in the process leading to the total elimination of their nuclear weapons.***

16. As a Non-Nuclear weapon State, Ireland can only press for progress on the implementation of these steps. We note in particular the importance of the principle of transparency contained in this step. Together with the principles of irreversibility and verification, transparency should apply to all disarmament and arms control efforts.

17. Work has been ongoing in particular in the area of reductions of non-strategic nuclear weapons. Ireland continues to support this initiative and reiterates the call made by the New Agenda Coalition in resolution 58/50 (Reduction of non-strategic nuclear weapons) at the session of the General Assembly in 2003.

18. As Ireland's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Dermot Ahern, has commented some 15 years after the end of the cold war, we are concerned when it appears that nuclear weapons are still reaffirmed as central to strategic concepts for the foreseeable future. That concern is all the more heightened in light of reports of plans to develop new nuclear weapons or modify such weapons for new uses. Ireland believes that such plans do nothing to inspire confidence.

Step 10

Arrangements by all nuclear-weapon states to place, as soon as practicable, fissile material designated by each of them as no longer required for military purposes under IAEA or other relevant international verification and arrangements for the disposition of such material for peaceful purposes, to ensure that such material remains permanently outside of military programmes.

19. Ireland calls on nuclear weapon States, which have not yet done so, to make such arrangements.

Step 11

Reaffirmation that the ultimate objective of the efforts of States in the disarmament process is general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

20. Ireland works actively in a number of disarmament fora and is a State Party to, inter alia, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the Convention on Conventional Weapons, and Ottawa Convention. Ireland is also active in working within the European Union to strengthen the Union's policy on weapons of mass destruction.

21. Ireland also participates in a number of export control fora, namely the Australia Group, The Missile Technology Control Regime, Nuclear Suppliers Group, Wassenaar Arrangement and Zangger Committee. Ireland sees effective export control as complementary to multilateral disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control efforts.

22. It is crucially important that all members of the international community work together to root out the black market in nuclear materials and technology. All countries must spare no effort in tackling illicit trafficking and procurement networks, and in addressing the issue of non-State actor involvement in the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction technology. States should also ensure the fullest possible disclosure of all relevant information at their disposal to the International Atomic Energy Agency in order to assist its ongoing investigations.

Step 12

Regular reports, within the framework of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons strengthened review process, by all States parties on the implementation of article VI and paragraph 4 (c) of the 1995 Decision on "Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament", and recalling the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice of 8 July 1996.

23. Ireland considers regular reporting to be a key element of the 13 steps and presented a report to the third Preparatory Committee in 2004. Ireland views reporting not as an end in itself but as an important tool in strengthening the NPT process, through greater transparency.

Step 13

The further development of the verification capabilities that will be required to provide assurance of compliance with nuclear disarmament agreements for the achievement and maintenance of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

24. Ireland believes that the vital role played by the IAEA safeguards system in the global non-proliferation regime must be acknowledged and reinforced during the 2005 NPT Review Conference. The 2000 Review Conference specifically endorsed the measures of the Model Additional Protocol approved by the International Atomic Energy Agency.

25. Ireland supports the IAEA in its verification tasks and strongly favours a system of strengthened IAEA Safeguards. Ireland together with all other EU Member States has completed its ratification procedures with respect to an Additional Protocol with the IAEA in April 2004. We believe that the Additional Protocol should be considered an essential part of an effective safeguards regime and that the Additional Protocol, together with the IAEA Safeguards Agreement, should be considered the verification standard for all NPT States Parties. We would urge all States, regardless of the size or nature of their nuclear programme, which have not yet signed and ratified an Additional Protocol to do so.